GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4984
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
HEARINGS ON INDO-PAK DISPUTE
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned `ICJ opens hearings on India-Pakistan dispute` appearing in the Times of India dated April 4, 2000;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the manner in which the Government are tackling the case?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the report appearing in the Times of India on April 4, 2000.

(b) On September 21, 1999, Pakistan filed a complaint before the International Court of Justice, The Hague, seeking compensation for the shooting down of their military combat aircraft on 10th August 1999. On 2nd November, 1999, India submitted its preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the Court in accordance with its Declaration of 15th September 1974, filed under Article 36 (2) of the Statute of the Court. Under its Declaration, inter alia, any dispute between India and a country which is or has been a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, and disputes which are covered by multilateral treaties, are to be excluded from the Court`s jurisdiction.

(c) Oral hearings concerning the issue of jurisdiction of the Court were held from April 3-6, 2000 at The Hague, following the submission of a Memorial by Pakistan and a Counter-Memorial by India on the Preliminary Objections raised by India. The Attorney General of India led the Indian legal team at these hearings. The decision of the Court on the matter of jurisdiction is expected by June, 2000.